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## Environmental security expert to speak at Ohio State

COLUMBUS -- Growth, crisis and renewal of societies is the topic of a lecture by a leading expert in environmental security on Tuesday, October 2, at noon at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave., on the campus of The Ohio State University.

Thomas Homer-Dixon, director of the Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and professor of political science at the University of Toronto, will speak on "A Theory of Societal Collapse: Convergent Shocks, Thermodynamic Disequilibrium, and Brittleness."

Homer-Dixon's research focuses on threats to global security in the 21st century and on how societies adapt to complex economic, ecological, and technological change. His work is highly interdisciplinary, drawing on political science, economics, environmental studies, geography, cognitive science, social psychology, and complex systems theory.

Homer-Dixon is author of *The Upside of Down: Catastrophe, Creativity, and the Renewal of Civilization* (Knopf, Island Press, 2006), which argues that today's converging energy, environmental, and political-economic stresses could cause a breakdown of national and global order. Yet there are things we can do to keep such a breakdown from being catastrophic, and some kinds of breakdown could even open up extraordinary opportunities for creative, bold reform of our societies if we're prepared to exploit these opportunities when they arise.

He is also author of *The Ingenuity Gap* (Knopf, Jonathan Cape, 2000), which won the 2001 Governor General's Non-fiction Award; *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton, 1999), which received the 2000 Lynton Keith Caldwell Prize from the American Political Science Association; and, co-edited with Jessica Blitt, *Ecoviolence: Links among Environment, Population, and Security* (Rowman &



Thomas Homer-Dixon  
Director, Trudeau Centre  
for Peace and Conflict  
Studies  
University of Toronto

Littlefield, 1998).

Homer-Dixon received a bachelor's degree in political science from Carleton University in Ottawa in 1980, and a Ph.D. in political science from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1989.

### **About the Mershon Center for International Security Studies**

The Mershon Center for International Security Studies advances the understanding of national security in a global context by fostering interdisciplinary faculty and student research in three areas of focus: the use of force and diplomacy; the ideas, identities, and decisional processes that affect security; and the institutions that manage violent conflict. The Mershon Center is a unit of the [Office of International Affairs](#) at [The Ohio State University](#).

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